

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6210
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 3415

FOR ARA/ECA ROBERT ZIMMERMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON, EFIN, SHUM, GT
SUBJ: MEETING WITH PARAGUAYAN OFFICIALS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. AT INVITATION OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY-STATE
ARRELLANO, PARAGUAYAN DELEGATES TO 1977 ANNUAL MEETING OF
INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB) MET INFORMALLY ON
MAY 30 WITH U.S. DELEGATES TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS IN PARAGUAY
AND U.S. POLICY OF TAKING HUMAN RIGHTS FACTORS INTO CONSI-
DERATION WHEN ASSESSING LOANS BY INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL
INSTITUTIONS (IFI'S).

2. THE CHIEF PARAGUAYAN REPRESENTATIVE TO IDB, CESAR ROMEO
ACOSTA, WAS ACCOMPANIED BY EULALIO PALACIOS OF MINISTRY OF
TREASURY AND CLAUDIO RIEDEL (HONORARY PARAGUAYAN CONSUL IN
GUATEMALA). CONGRESSMAN HERMAN BADILLO, DEMOCRAT, NEW YORK,
ALSO JOINED MEETING.

3. ARELLANO OPENED THE DISCUSSION NOTING THAT WE UNDER-
STOOD THE PARAGUAYAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD SAID ON MAY 6
IN ASUNCION THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PERMIT THE INTER-
AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (IAHRC) TO VISIT
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PARAGUAY. THE US, ARELLANO SAID, HOPED THAT THE ARRANGE-
MENTS FOR SUCH A VISIT COULD BE MADE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

4. ACOSTA RECOUNTED EFFORTS BY PARAGUAY TO DEVELOP ITSELF
IN THE FACE OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS. HE SAID HE WAS THE HEAD
OF THE CENTRAL BANK AND THEREFORE NOT WELL INFORMED ON
POLITICAL MATTERS. ACOSTA THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT THERE

SHOULD BE NO BARRIER TO A VISIT BY A RESPONSIBLE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP AND ADDED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WAS WELCOME TO SEE FOR ITSELF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN PARAGUAY.

5. CONGRESSMAN BADILLO OUTLINED BRIEFLY THE HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION IN THE US OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. SPEAKING FLUENT SPANISH, HE SAID HE BELIEVED COUNTRIES THAT FELT THEY HAD NO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM TO HIDE SHOULD LET ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE IAHRG COME IN TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES. BADILLO ALSO EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS ON THE HOUSE BANKING AND CURRENCY COMMITTEE WHICH PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DELIBERATIONS REGARDING US PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. MR. RIEDEL ASKED IN A SEMI-RHETORICAL FASHION IF THE US OFFICIALS THOUGHT IT WAS RIGHT TO PUNISH THOSE WHO KIDNAPPED PERSONS. ARELLANO SAID YES, PROVIDED DUE PROCESS OF LAW WAS FOLLOWED. RIEDEL ALSO REMARKED THAT HE WAS AWARE THAT UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO VISIT COUNTRIES LIKE CUBA OR CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

6. AT CONCLUSION OF DISCUSSION, ACOSTA SAID HE UNDERSTOOD INFORMAL NATURE OF US ENCOURAGEMENT TO INVITE IAHRG TO VISIT PARAGUAY AND WOULD CONVEY THE US VIEWS TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

7. COMMENT: ACOSTA CLEARLY DID NOT HAVE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF PROPOSED VISIT BY IAHRG. FOLLOWING EXPLANATION BY ARELLANO, AND WITH SOME COACHING BY RIEDEL, HE QUICKLY GRASPED THE THRUST OF US VIEWS. MEETING HELD IN INFORMAL, CONFIDENTIAL

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CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE. CONGRESSMAN BADILLO IMPRESSED GOP OFFICIALS WITH EARNESTNESS OF US CONGRESS IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS. BADILLO HIMSELF APPEARED TO BE HIGHLY SATISFIED THAT HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN MEETING, AND SUGGESTED THAT A COPY OF HIS BILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR LATIN AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS IN OTHER DISCUSSIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.
BOSTER

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Message Attributes

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